United Nations E/CONF.105/73

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
30 June 2017

Original: English

Eleventh United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names
New York, 8-17 August 2017
Item 9 (d) of the provisional agenda*
National standardization: Administrative structure of national names authorities, legislation, policies and procedures

Geographical Names Network in Sweden

Summary**

The Geographical Names Network was established in 2013 under the responsibility of the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It was created to generate awareness and share best practices on how to standardize the use of foreign country names and other important geographical locations. Its purpose is to provide guidance and to give advice or recommendations on individual name issues, not only with regard to place names but also with regard to the names of public service authorities and job titles. Swedish terminology will be developed in this regard, and good place-name practice will be promoted.

The Geographical Names Network serves to promote standardized uniformity regarding place-name practice and provide advice on how to render foreign place names in different official situations, such as news reporting. It also provides the correct names of geographical locations in Swedish and advice on how to use them, including the use of diacritics in the Swedish and Sami languages. Information, advice and recommendations in this regard are published on the Internet.

The Geographical Names Network comprises the most relevant and important participants dealing with official activities regarding Swedish place names: the mapping, cadaster and real estate authority of Sweden, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Institute for Language and Folklore, including the Language Council of Sweden, the University of Uppsala, the Swedish Centre for Terminology, Radio Sweden, the Swedish Standards Institute, the Swedish Translation Service in the General Secretariat of the European Union Council and the Institute for the Languages of Finland.

The participants represent a core team and, together with their own networks, ensure a broad representation in society of ideas and recommendations of the Geographical Names Network.

* E/CONF.105/1.

** The full report was prepared by Annette Torensjö and Leila Mattfolk, and is available from http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/UNGEGN/ungegnConf11.html, in the language of submission only, as document E/CONF.105/73/CRP.73.

17-09387 (E) 240717

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The representative from the Institute for Language and Folklore is the chair of the Geographical Names Network and the secretary represents the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Network meets three to four times per year, convened by the secretary. The Network is free to elect new members at their meetings, if they consider it necessary. Members can also invite relevant experts and lecturers to participate at single meetings. Members participate as representatives of their organizations, not in their personal capacity. Any member who is prevented from continuing to pa.ticipate is responsible for suggesting a replacement.

The Geographical Names Network is consulted on issues concerning questions of foreign names, for instance, the official book of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on how to use foreign place names. The book is intended for employees of Government offices, authorities and organizations, but it is also used by journalists and the general public. It contains country names and the names of European Union agencies. It also contains translations of the names of authorities and important organizations in Sweden, as well as titles in State services, into English, French, German and Spanish and, to a certain extent, Finnish and Russian.